

A
 REVIEW
 OF THE
 STATE
 OF THE
 BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, December 20. 1709.

Perhaps the continuing so long upon the Affairs of *Scotland* may be thought tedious to you, by some People, who, I know, are always furnished with long Stories.

But I could not dispense with giving you one Paper more, by reading of which you will see four Things relating to *Scotland*.

First, You will see the Need there is, and the Usefulness of the late Society erected by her Majesty in that Country, and, which I shall in its Time take Occasion to say more to you about, call'd, *The Society for propagating of Christian Knowledge*—In order to plant the wild and Northern Parts of *Scotland* with Schools and Ministers, where 'tis very sad to observe for many great

Tracts of Land, no such Thing as Religion of any Kind whatsoever has ever yet been heard of, no more than was found in the Northern Continent of *America*, indeed not so much.

Secondly, You will see, how little Need the Breaches between *Episcopal* and *Presbyterian* Church of *England*, or Kirk of *Scotland*, have to be pursu'd with such Violence, while Popery possesses; whole Tracts of Land in the North, entirely overspread with the *Roman* Catholick Religion, and Popish Interests also.

Thirdly, You may see, how the *Episcopal* Church for 28 Years, that they possess'd the Dominion of Ecclesiastick Affairs in *Scotland*, concern'd themselves for the planting

planting Christian Knowledge, and the Protestant Religion in *Scotland*—Since what little Knowledge of Religion is spread in those Parts, is owing wholly to the *Romish* Clergy, and not to the *Episcopal* Protestants.

Of all which I shall speak more at large hereafter.

Fourthly, You may observe, how that while the establish'd Church is *Presbyterian*, and while the *Episcopal* People cry out of Persecution——The *Episcopal* Heretors, Gentry, and Commonalty, in every Place where they can, abuse the Ministers, keep back the Teinds, or Tithes, pay those that are paid corruptly and arbitrarily——Oppress the Church, prevent the planting of Ministers in the difficultest and darkest Parts, and as much as lies in them discourage and discountenance, not the planting the *Presbyterian* Church only, but really the spreading and planting Christian Knowledge in general in the Country.

For the Particulars whereof, I refer the Reader to the following Paper.

A Representation given in to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by Mr. Martin Macpherson, Commissioner from the Presbytery of Skye,

Humbly Sheweth,

1. **T**hat the Presbytery of *Skye* being hemm'd in upon the one Side by a great Body of Papists, without so much as a Mixture of Protestants living among them, have within their own Bounds at least two Thousand Papists inhabiting whole and entire Countries; *Viz. Knodort, Egg, Moror, Cana, South Uist, and Barra*, the most Parts of the Isle of *Meick* and *Roum*, and who are animated by Popish Heretors and *Romish* Priests, to continue in their Superstition and Idolatry, besides a Mixture of Papists in all the Parishes within their Bounds, except One.

2. That the Presbytery of *Skye* consisting but of six *Presbyterian* Ministers; there are residing and officiating within their Bounds seven Popish Priests at least, *viz. Mr. Mat-slenan, and Mr. Dalglish in Knodort, Broyr. Neil, . . . in Moror, Callum, Macplice in*

Egg, and the adjacent Continent, Mr. Gordone in South Uist, and an other in the Land of Benbeculas House, and the Seventh in Barra.

3. That in the whole Bounds of the Presbytery of *Skye*, consisting of 11 Paroches, or rather Provinces, capable even as to the Number of Souls, of being erected into 42 Paroches, and as to the Extent of Bounds capable to be erected into 24, and few enough; there are no publick standing Schools but one in the Isle of *Skye*, lately erected by the deceased Laird of *Macleod*, with a Salary of 50 *l. Scots*, and an other at *Sternoway* in *Leuis* with a Salary of 80 *l. Scots*, so that inevitable Ignorance must abound to the Ruin of Souls, and great Detriment of the Country.

4. That there being but two Paroches in the great and spacious Isle of *Leuis*, there is a Corner thereof call'd *Uig*, capable of being erected into a Paroch, both as to the Number of Souls and Extent of Bounds, a good Part of which Corner is 16 Miles distance from the nearest Place of Worship, which Corner is so ill seated, that it is disown'd to pertain to any Paroch whatsoever; the only Neighbouring Minister *Mr. Allan Monsone*, declaring, that it is no Part of his Paroch; yea, a R. Brother of our Presbytery, who had Occasion to go to that Country, judicially narrating before the Presbytery with a great Deal of Seriousness, that the foresaid Neighbouring Minister gave it to him under his Hand, that he disown'd that Corner to belong to his Charge; so that here is a Place within the Bosom of a Christian Constitute Church absolutely without the Gospel, yea in which the Gospel was never yet planted; the Consequence is also obvious as sad.

5. There are Fonds in the foresaid Isle of *Leuis* for erecting the foresaid Corner in a Paroch, yea, and for more pious Uses too. But the Family of *Seaforth*, who have no Title to the Tithes of that Country, either Parsonage or Vicaridge, by their Influence upon the former Ministers, engag'd them to assign their Tithes to the said Family, for a certain Sum of Money to be pay'd to them yearly in lieu of their Stipends; so that the Earl of *Seaforth* sets the Vicaridge of

of that Country yearly at 2000 Marks *Scots*, which is more than is now pay'd to the two Ministers of *Leuin* for their Stipends, and the School-Master of *Siornoway* for his Salary, and have also in the mean time incorporated the Parsonage to the Land-Rent, which at a modest Calculation may be rated at 2000 Marks more; so that it appears, that there is two Thousand Marks of Concealment, which if recover'd, would tend much to the Design of propagating of Christian Knowledge.

6. That they have no modify'd Stipends according to Law in that Place, there having never been *Decretes of Locality*, pass'd in Relation to these Bounds, except the Paroch of *Glenelg*, which lies on the Continent; so that when Lands fall waste, which is too frequent there, the Ministers are defrauded proportionally of a Part of their Stipends, to their great Detriment, and in such Paroches as pay *Ipsa Corpora*, (we should rather say a Shadow thereof) the Ministers are mightily injur'd in the Quantity of the Species *reindable*, by detaining from them perhaps the Half that is due to them by Law, for they get not the *Sheaf*, but are fain to compound; and tho' a Tenant Crop might really be vallu'd to 100 *Boles*, so that the Tithes thereof should be 10 *Boles*, the Minister is thought to be discreetly and honestly dealt with if he gets 5 *Boles*, and that very ill pay'd; and tho' a Tenant should have 100 Milk-Cows, the Product of which for 15 Days pertain to the Minister, according to the true Rules of *Ipsa Corpora*, he'll give no more but the Product of 30, or perhaps less, and this Humour must be yielded to for Peace Sake; and as the Ministers are wrong'd in the Quantity, so they are wrong'd also in the Quality of the Species, they receive, which are for the most Part so naughty and insufficient, that they are not for the Mercat, yea scarcely for any Use; and consequently Ministers Stipends are so ineffectual, that there is no Minister within the Presbytery, except one, who has the modify'd Stipend, that may safely venture his Credit for 100 Marks upon his Stipend, whereby Ministers are kept constantly in such puzzling Straits, that they cannot keep Presbyteries, Synods,

or Assemblies, and there is no Hope of redressing this Grievance without a Valuation of Teinds amongst us, yea, and that such a Valuation as might constitute the Heretors, the only Pay-masters of Tithes. This was desirable, not only for the comfortable Settlement of the Ministers, but also for the Success of the Gospel.

7. That the Paroch of *Sinart* is come short of the legal Stipend, it being but 600 Marks, the rest being partly exacted by the Laird of *Macleod* for his own Use, there being a considerable Part of the Paroch belonging to *Macleod*, out of which he exacts the Proportion of Tithes payable by them to the Minister of *Sinart*, and partly detain'd by Sir *Donald Macdonald*, there being Lands to the Vallue of 110 Marks by Year, belonging to the said Sir *Donald* within that Paroch, of which the Minister gets no Teinds, tho' the Proprietor of that Land has no Pretence of Right, either in Writing, or otherwise, to that Immunity.

8. That the Case of the Paroch of *Harris* being a Vacancy, is also very clamant, being at such a great Distance, that it cannot be supply'd by Neighbouring Ministers, nor a Prospect of getting it planted in haste, because of the following Discouragements. 1. The Incompetence of the Stipend being but six hundred Marks *Scots*, nominate, and not so much effectual. 2. The Discontiguity of the Bounds, by Reason of which the Minister must preach in seven different Places, and pass the Sea to them all. 3. The Danger to which the Minister is expos'd betwixt the Islands by Shelves and rough Seas. 4. The great Expence the Minister must be at in exercising his Ministerial Work, for he must keep a sufficient Boat, and four able Hands at least, for transporting him from Island to Island.

All which is humbly represented, &c.

Sign'd.

Martin Macpherson.